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Patient and Provider Perspectives

December 4, 2013



A collaborative study including Dr. Yelena Tarasenko, assistant professor of health policy and management at the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health Georgia Southern University examines *Patient and Provider Perspectives on the Relationship between Multiple Morbidity Management and Disease Prevention*. Despite competing demands of multiple morbidity (MM) management and disease prevention, our recent survey of 1,153 Appalachian residents aged 50 to 76 documented that individuals with MM were more likely to obtain colorectal cancer screening (CRCS) than those without MM. Nearly two thirds of respondents obtained CRCS, and the more MM, the greater the likelihood of screening. To gain insight into this relationship, we conducted nine focus groups, six with providers and three with patients. Three main

explanations emerged: (a) patients' MM increases providers' vigilance for other health vulnerabilities; (b) having MM increases patients' own vigilance; and (c) patients' vigilance may stem from experiencing more symptoms, having a family history of cancer, and having successfully obtained health care. More frequent contact with health care providers appears to encourage preventive referral, especially in low-income populations that otherwise may not receive such counseling. We highlight participant recommendations to improve MM management and prevention.

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